

DATE: December 30, 1968

To : Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics

FROM : Dr. Leonard Hayflick
Department of Medical Microbiology

SUBJECT: Influenza Vaccines

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Thanks for your thoughtfulness in sending along a copy of your column on influenza vaccines. Your points are good ones and effectively made. One interesting aside in respect to distribution of precious influenza vaccine is the question of priorities relevant to who should receive it first, etc. Practically this is a problem for the manufacturers and all - to a man - see this as a really hot potato. How can the government expect each manufacturer independently to set up priorities for distribution of its vaccine which in some cases may be potentially life-saving? The pressures, accusations, and initial black-market potential is a real can of worms. The DHEW could have established priorities long ago. We all remember what happened to the Salk vaccine when it first became generally available. The children of physicians received it first. It was (perhaps with some poetic justice) later learned that those early batches were all contaminated with live SV₄₀.

In respect to the broader problem, even the common cold is subject to amelioration with vaccines now since the technology is known; all that is needed is motivation in the right places.

Thanks again for your interest.

Sincerely yours,



LH:ap